

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

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DRAFTED BY EB/AN:MHSTYLES:TP

APPROVED BY EB/AN:MHSTYLES

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ARA/EP - MR. CLARKE

ARA/EP - MR. PRINGLE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 231095

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, EC

SUBJECT: CIVAIR CONSULTATIONS

REF: QUITO 6903

1. DEPARTMENT IS RELUCTANT AT THIS STAGE TO AGREE TO CONSULTATIONS IN FACE OF GOE REFUSAL TO RESCIND ORDER RESTRICTING BRANIFF. IF CONSULTATIONS WERE HELD UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, ECUADOR WOULD PRESUMABLY INSIST ON NEW YORK RIGHTS BUT, SINCE WE DOUBT ECUATORIANA IN POSITION OPERATE TO NEW YORK AT THIS TIME AND MAY BE MORE INTERESTED IN SHORT TERM IN PROTECTING ITS MIAMI SERVICE, US AGREEMENT TO CONCEDE NEW YORK MAY NOT RESTORE BRANIFF'S FLIGHTS, MUCH LESS RESULT IN AGREEMENT THAT GOE WILL NOT UNILATERALLY RESTRICT BRANIFF IN FUTURE.

2. ON OTHER HAND, WHILE WE DO NOT EXCLUDE FOREVER POSSIBLE USEFULNESS OF US AVIATION RETALIATORY ACTIONS, THIS DOES NOT APPEAR BE A WISE CHOICE AT MOMENT SINCE BRANIFF ULTIMATELY HAS MORE TO LOSE THAN ECUATORIANA.
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3. ALTHOUGH ONE CANNOT BE CERTAIN, IT APPEARS THAT GOE DECISIONS ARE BEING MADE BY MILITARY GENERALS WHO CONTROL ECUATORIANA AND NATIONAL AVIATION COUNCIL, RATHER THAN BY FONOFF OR COL. SUAREZ. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR EMBASSY TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH APPARENT

REAL SOURCES OF POWER IN A FURTHER EFFORT TO REMOVE RESTRICTIONS. WE ALSO NOTE THAT THESE OFFICIALS MAY STILL HARBOUR ILL FEELINGS OVER THE WAY THEY BELIEVE GOE WAS TREATED IN 1967 CONSULTATIONS. (INCLUDED IN ECUADOR DELEGATION AT THAT TIME WERE COL. EDUARDO CHECA OF COUNCIL AND LT. COL. JOSE M. MONTESINOS OF DAC). KEY OFFICIAL, WE UNDERSTAND IS GENERAL ALMEIDA, MINISTER DEFENSE, MEMBER AVIATION COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT ECUATORIANA; LESSER ROLE EXERCISED BY GENERAL IZURIETA, COMMANDING GENERAL AIR FORCE AND MEMBER AVIATION COUNCIL.

4. AMONG POINTS THAT COULD BE MADE IN SUCH DISCUSSION ARE FOLLOWING:

A. US AVIATION AUTHORITIES HAVE TRIED TO ASSIST ECUADOR'S AVIATION DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY DURING PAST TWO YEARS. FOR EXAMPLE, BOGOTA ADDED TO ECUATORIANA'S PERMIT, ECUATORIANA GRANTED AUTHORITY OPERATE CHARTERS TO ANY POINT IN US, AND CAB IS EXPEDITING ISSUANCE OF PERMIT TO RESTRUCTURED ECUATORIANA. GOE, ON OTHER HAND, HAS SUDDENLY RESTRICTED BRANIFF'S OPERATIONS. US DOES NOT EVEN REQUIRE ECUATORIANA TO FILE SCHEDULES WITH CAB. IT IS FREE OPERATE AS MANY FREQUENCIES AS IT WISHES.

B. THERE IS ENOUGH TRAFFIC TO WARRANT BRANIFF'S FLIGHTS, AS WELL AS THOSE OF ECUATORIANA.

C. US REALIZES ECUADOR HAS UNFULFILLED DESIRE ADD NEW YORK TO ITS US ROUTE. WE ARE FULLY PREPARED GIVE THIS SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. (IN OTHER WORDS, US REACTION IN 1967 SHOULD BE FORGOTTEN).

D. HOWEVER, US CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO CONSULT UNDER CONFIDENTIAL

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DURESS. BILATERAL AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR CONSULTATIONS, NOT UNILATERAL ACTION. (WE CANNOT ACCEPT VIEW THAT APPROVAL OF BRANIFF FREQUENCY INCREASE WAS GRANTED IN JULY ON UNDERSTANDING IT COULD BE WITHDRAWN. THERE WAS NO SUCH UNDERSTANDING. GOE ASSERTION THAT SUCH UNDERSTANDING EXISTED IS CLEARLY AN EX POST FACTO ATTEMPT TO RATIONALIZE THE RESTRICTION).

E. SITUATION COULD DEVELOP INTO A CONFRONTATION, WITH NO IMMEDIATE SOLUTION IN SIGHT FOR EITHER SIDE, UNLESS TERMS OF AGREEMENT ARE OBSERVED.

5. IF EMBASSY BELIEVES IT DESIRABLE, DONALD L. LITTON OF CAB IS PREPARED VISIT QUITO IMMEDIATELY TO JOIN IN FOREGOING INFORMAL DISCUSSION.

6. IF GOE CONTINUES TO REFUSE LIFT RESTRICTIONS, WE WILL RESERVE DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT AGREE TO CONSULTATIONS. FOR MOMENT, WE ARE INCLINED TO HOLD TO HARD LINE AGAINST FORMAL CONSULTATIONS, BUT POSSIBLY EXPRESS WILLINGNESS HAVE SOME MEMBERS USDEL VISIT QUITO FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSION SOMETIME DURING WEEK OF NOVEMBER 18. INGERSOLL

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